

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

**1. (currently amended)** An interlabial pad with a size, weight, and flexibility capable of being held between labia by ~~pinching~~ a part or the whole portion of the interlabial pad naturally therebetween, having a first axis that is substantially parallel to an anteroposterior axis of a wearer, and a second axis which is included in a horizontal plane when the wearer is standing and perpendicular to the first axis, comprising:

an absorbent body for absorbing body fluid, the absorbent body having a shape selected from the group consisting of elliptical-planar shapes, gourd-planar shapes and tear drop-planar shapes, the absorbent body having ~~one or~~ a plurality of bending elements each including a slit formed on a surface of the absorbent body ~~with a prescribed length and depth~~, the bending elements each being provided in a prescribed position of the absorbent body with a lower [[smaller]] bending strength compared to positions other than the prescribed position, ~~in order to make the absorbent body easy to bend into a U-shape along the first axis or an S-shape along the second axis; [[and]]~~

a plurality of first bending element pieces, each first bending element piece extending for a first prescribed length in a direction that is substantially parallel with the first axis, and the plurality of first bending element pieces including:

i) first bending element pieces having the slit positioned along the center line of the absorbent body in parallel with the first axis,

(ii) first bending element pieces having the slit arranged to reach a first peripheral edge of the absorbent body, and

(iii) first bending element pieces having the slit positioned between the center line of the absorbent body and the first peripheral edge of the absorbent body; and

a plurality of second bending element pieces, each second bending element piece extending for a second prescribed length that is substantially parallel with the second axis, and the plurality of second bending element pieces including:

i) second bending element pieces having the slit positioned to cross the center line of the  
absorbent body,

(ii) second bending element pieces having the slit arranged to reach a second peripheral edge of the absorbent body, and

(iii) second bending element pieces having the slit positioned between the center line of  
the absorbent body and the second peripheral edge of the absorbent body, wherein

a [[coating]] covering material encloses [[enclosing]] the absorbent body[[,]] and maintains ~~maintaining~~ an effect of the bending elements, the [[coating]] covering material defining a main form of the interlabial pad, wherein a surface of the [[coating]] covering material is not provided with slits ~~the slit-like processing~~, and

ones of the bending elements are each formed from one of the plurality of first bending element pieces and one of the plurality of second bending element pieces, the slit in each of bending elements extending in both the one first element bending piece and the one second bending element piece, and a crossing point of the one first element bending piece and the one second element bending piece lies along the center line of the absorbent body

one of the bending elements is formed in a bending element piece in which the slit is extended, the bending element piece including a vertical bending element piece that is extended in a direction that is substantially parallel to the second axis.

2. (canceled).

3. (currently amended) The interlabial pad according to claim 1 [[2]], wherein each slit has a length of 3 to 30 mm and a breadth no greater than [[of]] 5 mm ~~or less~~, and a distance between each parallel adjacent slit is 3 to 20 mm.

4. (canceled).

5. (currently amended) The interlabial pad according to claim 1, wherein: the ones of the plurality of bending elements that are formed from each of a first bending element piece and a second bending element piece the bending element is formed of a bending element piece in which the slit is extended; and a plurality of the bending element pieces are arranged in a line that is symmetrical with respect to the center line of the interlabial pad, which lies along the first axis of the interlabial pad.

6. -10. (canceled).

**11. (currently amended)** The interlabial pad according to claim 1, wherein [[the]] ones of the bending elements include a third bending element piece~~element is formed of a bending element piece~~ in which the slit is extended, and wherein the third bending element piece is positioned near the center line of the absorbent body interlabial pad and extends in a direction V-shape towards the peripheral edges of the absorbent body from the second axis at a prescribed angle.

**12. (canceled).**

**13. (currently amended)** The interlabial pad according to claim 1, wherein each of the bending [[element]] elements includes a low density portion.

**14. (previously presented)** The interlabial pad according to claim 1, wherein an opposite side surface to a body of the interlabial pad comprises a mini sheet piece which is provided over one side part to another side part, wherein both side parts are substantially parallel to the first axis of the interlabial pad; and a finger insert hole is formed between the mini sheet piece and the opposite side surface to the body.

**15. (previously presented)** The interlabial pad according to claim 1, wherein the interlabial pad is a pad for an incontinence of urine.

**16. (previously presented)** The interlabial pad according to claim 1, wherein the interlabial pad is a pad for absorbing vaginal discharge.

**17. (currently amended)** A method of adjusting a form flexibility used for an interlabial pad with a size, weight, flexibility capable of being held between labia by a part or the whole portion of the interlabial pad being naturally inserted therebetween, having a first axis that is substantially parallel to an anteroposterior axis of a wearer, and a second axis which is included in a horizontal plane when the wearer is standing and is perpendicular to the first axis, the interlabial pad comprising:

an absorbent body for absorbing body fluid and a coating material for enclosing said absorbent body, the absorbent body defining a main form of the interlabial pad; and ~~one or a~~ plurality of bending elements each including a slit formed on a surface of the absorbent body with a prescribed length and depth, the bending elements each being provided in a prescribed position of the absorbent body interlabial pad with a lower bending strength compared to positions of the absorbent body a part other than the prescribed position, in order to make the interlabial pad ~~absorbent body~~ easy to bend into a U-shape along the first axis or an S-shape along the second axis,

wherein ~~one of each of the~~ plurality of bending elements is formed from a first bending element piece and a second bending element piece in a bending element piece in which the slit is extended in both of the first bending element piece and the second bending element piece, wherein the bending element piece including a vertical bending element piece that is extended in a direction that is substantially parallel to the second axis,

the first bending element piece extends in a substantially parallel direction to the first axis,  
the second bending element piece extends in a substantially parallel direction to the second axis, and

the first bending element piece and the second bending element piece cross each other near a center line substantially parallel to the first axis of the interlabial pad,

the method comprising the step of:

adjusting the form flexibility of the interlabial pad by a bending element application method using the plurality of bending elements [[element]].

**18. (currently amended)** The method of adjusting a form flexibility according to claim 17, wherein the adjustment bending element-application method further comprises the step of changing one or more of the form, number, positioning area, and arrangement of one or more of the bending elements element.

**19. (new)** The interlabial pad according to claim 1, wherein the first bending element pieces having the slit positioned between the center line of the absorbent body and the first peripheral edge of the absorbent body are positioned at a boundary between an extension part of the interlabial pad and a long protrusion part of the interlabial pad.